

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

OMB-01 TRSE-00 CU-02 ACDA-07 DHA-02 /079 W

-----040758Z 063936 /17

R 011225Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5460

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT SF

SUBJECT: TROUBLE OR TRUCE: SCHOOL REOPENING DAY IN SOWETO JANUARY 5

1. SOWETO'S SRC (STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL) ISSUED STATEMENT JANUARY 1 CALLING ON STUDENTS TO RETURN TO SCHOOLS WHEN THEY ARE DUE REOPEN JANUARY 5 ON GROUNDS (1) THAT SAG SHOULD BE GIVEN FURTHER CHANCE TO BE "SENSIBLE" AND SCRAP "BANTU EDUCATION" AND RELEASE STUDENT DETAINEES AND (2) NEED OF YOUTH FOR BEST EDUCATION POSSIBLE. STATEMENT ADDED: "WE APPEAL TO ALL PARENTS TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL AS WE REALISE THAT EDUCATION IS THE CORNERSTONE OF EVERY NATION. IF WE ASPIRE FOR FUTURE LEADERSHIP, THEN WE SHOULD ACQUIRE THE BEST EDUCATION AVAILABLE -- NOT THE INFERIOR BANTU EDUCATION -- NOW. BANTU EDUCATION HAS BECOME THE BONE OF CONTENTION AMONG THE STUDENTS WHO WILL NOT RETURN TO SCHOOL."

2. ALONG WITH HUNDREDS OF PARENTS, BLACK NEWSPAPER "THE WORLD" (DECEMBER 31) CALLED IN LEAD EDITORIAL FOR STUDENTS' RETURN TO SCHOOLS: "THE ENVISAGED CHANGES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BANTU
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EDUCATION -- WHICH HAPPILY IS ALSO TO HAVE A NAME CHANGE -- ARE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION ... IT IS NOW UP TO US TO ENSURE THAT THE OPENING OF SCHOOLS NEXT WEEK PROCEEDS AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE."

3. SRC DENIED ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR BURNING OF THREE SOWETO SCHOOLS AT END OF WEEK (NONTU PRIMARY IN ROCKVILLE,

PHAKAMANI HIGHER PRIMARY IN ZONDI, AND NDONI HIGHER PRIMARY IN MEADOWLANDS) AND CONDEMNED ACTION "IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS". SRC SPOKESMAN STATED: " WE ARE NOT THE ADVOCATES OF DESTRUCTION. WE DEMONSTRATED THAT WE HAVE THE INTEREST OF OUR COMMUNITY AT HEART A FEW WEEKS AGO WHEN WE CLEANED UP THE FILTHY STREETS OF SOWETO NEGLECTED SINCE JUNE."

4. HOW MANY OF SOWETO'S SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL RETURN TO CLASSES ON JANUARY 5 IS STILL MUCH IN QUESTION. MANY, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN SENT BY THEIR PARENTS TO SAFER SCHOOL DISTRICTS ELSEWHERE, AND SOME HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY FOR BLS SANCTUARIES AND BEYOND. T W KAMBULE, PRINCIPAL OF ORLANDO HIGH SCHOOL, SOWETO'S LARGEST, STATED DECEMBER 30 THAT HE HOPED FOR A 10 PCT TURNOUT, WITH MANY STUDENTS ADOPTING A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE. HE SAID " THE NUMBERS MIGHT VERY WELL INCREASE, PROVIDED THE PUPILS CAN SEE THAT THERE IS NO POLICE HARASSMENT OR ACTIVITY IN THE SCHOOLS. IT WILL TAKE ONE INCIDENT, ONLY ONE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE POLICE, FOR THE WHOLE THING TO BREAK DOWN ONCE MORE." V. KRAAI, CHAIRMAN OF SOWETO WEST HIGH SCHOOL BOARD, SAID " THE CHILDREN ARE OVERWHELMINGLY AFRAID OF THE POLICE... DURING THIS TIME THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE ABSOLUTE RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF THE POLICE...THE CHILDREN SIMPLY DON'T WANT TO BE SHOT." AT SAME TIME, BRIGADIER JAN VISSER, DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IN SOWETO, PUBLISHED HIS ASSURANCE THAT POLICE WOULD NOT HARASS PUPILS NOR ENTER SCHOOL GROUNDS ON OPENING DAY.

5. (ON DECEMBER 31, KAMBULE WAS PICKED UP BY SECURITY POLICE AT

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HIS HOME AT 3 AM FOR QUESTIONING, PRESUMABLY ABOUT ACTIVITIES OF HIS SON WHO IS STUDENT AT FORT HARE UNIVERSITY. KAMBULE WAS RELEASED LATER IN DAY. HIS DETENTION COULD WELL FRIGHTEN STUDENTS AS EXAMPLE OF POTENTIAL POLICE HARASSMENT.)

6. SAG'S NEWLY ANNOUNCED STEPS TO IMPROVE BLACK EDUCATION ARE POSITIVE GAINS, BUT ARE ELICITING CRITICISM FROM SOME BLACKS, YOUNG AND OLD, AS INSUFFICIENT. SAG'S NEW DEAL INCLUDES (1) FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR BLACKS TO STANDARD 2 (GRADE 4), (2) PROVISION OF FREE TEXT BOOKS TO ALL CLASSES FROM STANDARD 3 TO FORM 5 (GRADES 5 TO 9), GRADUALLY EXTENDING SUCH SUPPLY TO STANDARD 1 (GRADE 3), (3) FINANCING OF BUILDING AND UPKEEP OF STATE HIGH SCHOOLS IN URBAN TOWNSHIPS, (4) REDUCTION OF HIGH PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO, PHASING OUT DOUBLE-SESSION SYSTEM, AND (5) IMPROVEMENTS IN TRAINING AND CONDITIONS FOR BLACK TEACHERS. BLACK CRITICS DEMAND (1) FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION, EQUAL TO THAT OF WHITES, AT ALL LEVELS, (2) IMMEDIATE SUPPLY OF FREE TEXT BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT AS IN WHITE SCHOOLS, AT ALL LEVELS, AND (3) STATE

RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUILDING AND FINANCING OF ALL SCHOOLS,
NOT JUST HIGH SCHOOLS. IN EFFECT, DEMAND IS, AS PUT BY SRC,
FOR SCRAPPING OF BANTU EDUCATION AND FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF "UNI-
VERSAL EDUCATIN SYSTEM", BLACKS ON A PAR WITH WHITES.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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